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LETTERS

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TO THE

PUBLIC,

By His MAJESTY

THE

KING of *PRUSSIA*.

Translated from the Original EDITION,

Printed by AUTHORITY at *BERLIN*.



L O N D O N:

Printed for W. OWEN, at *Homer's Head*,
Temple-Bar. M.DCC.LIII.

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PUBLIC

By His Majesty

THE

KING of RUSSIA.

Translated from the original EDITION.

Printed by A. HORN at BERLIN.

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LONDON:

Printed for J. Johnson, Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.

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LETTERS

TO THE PUBLIC, &c.

LETTER I.

I HAVE always liked your Taste, and respected even your Whims and Fancies: I know you are extremely inquisitive after News, and I find myself ambitious of serving you. You are tired with those common Facts, which the petty Ministers you maintain in *Europe* entertain you with twice a Week: You want something singular, something surprizing. Your Ministers sometimes furnish you with incredible News, though doubtless real Facts; but that is not sufficient: You are

B fond

fond of Secrets in Politics; and I have just the same Inclination, with an excellent Knack at discovering them; whereby I am enabled to acquaint you with the most secret Matters now on the Anvil at a certain Court. You apprehend, without any farther Explanation from me, that in our Jargon a certain Court signifies that of *Berlin*. I have these Articles of Intelligence from the first Hand; they are not Hear-says, but real, undoubted Facts. I have discovered wonderful Things, which I do so much the more readily impart to you, as I am no Stranger to your Wisdom and Discretion, and am satisfied that this Secret will be kept between us.

Tremble for the Repose of *Europe*; we are at the Eve of an Event that may subvert the Balance of Power so wisely settled by our Fathers: There's an End of the Abbé *de*

de St. Pierre's System; it never can be brought to bear.

I hear that a grand Council was held at Court a few Days ago, at which all the chief Men assisted, and the Subject of it was as important as any within the Memory of Man. A Musician of *Aix* in *Provence* has sent two Menuets, which he has spent ten Years in composing, and desires that they may be play'd in the Carnival Season. This will appear frivolous to superficial Minds; but we Politicians, who see a *Finesse* in every thing, and pursue Consequences to their final Conclusions, are too solid to treat this Affair as a Trifle. The Musician's Demand having been taken into Consideration, the Council was divided: There was a Party for the Menuets, and another against them. The former insisted that they ought to be play'd, in order, by this Distinction, to encourage those who wish

well to a certain Power, though, as it unluckily happens, their Number is not very great. The Opponents answered, that it was inconsistent with the Glory of the Nation to play foreign Menuets, especially while so many new ones were daily made in the Kingdom: To which the others replied, that those Menuets might be good, though composed elsewhere, and that the Lovers of Arts ought to regard more the Art than the Country or Place from whence the Menuets were brought. These Reasons did not persuade the Opponents, who maintained that those Menuets ought to be deemed contraband. The Menuetists cried out against this Decision, and laboured hard to demonstrate, that if foreign Menuets were treated as contraband Goods, it would authorize other Nations to prohibit likewise all the Products of *Prussia* which they used to take; that to cramp Trade was the ready
Way

Way to destroy it; and, in fine, that other Powers would not calmly suffer the *Prussians* to give themselves such Airs as to exclude their Menuets from Dances and Festivities. Upon this their Antagonists grew warm, and insisted that Interest, and every other Consideration, ought always to be sacrificed to Honour and Glory: That it was beneath the Dignity of a Court to dance to any other Tunes than its own; that the Menuetists were Innovators, who wanted to introduce foreign Customs; that old Customs ought never to be departed from, no, not even if they were bad; and, in fine, that those Menuets would corrupt the Morals of the People. The Debate now grew so warm, that all spoke at once, every one insisted on his being in the Right, and would not hear what others had to say; and even the coolest being on the Point of giving foul Language, there

there was a Necessity for breaking up the Council.

The next Day it met again on the same Subject: Enthusiasm had subsided in the Interval, and a pacific Party had been formed. These reconciliatory Spirits proposed, in order to content every body, to allow the Menuet in Minor to be play'd, and reject the other: But tho' this Temperament was not accepted, because it was reasonable, that did not hinder them from venturing another Proposal, which was, to play the Menuets without dancing them. This was rejected by a considerable Majority, and 'tis confidently asserted that there is now in the Press a Kind of Manifesto, setting forth the Reasons for not executing the Menuets. This Step may be attended with Consequences of the greatest Importance: And as it may concern *Europe*, and excite your Curiosity especially, I shall be careful to inform myself

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myself of what may be farther done in it. It is certain that the Court is very intent upon this Business, as is natural to suppose, when one considers its Importance: A Menuet may become a very serious Concern. How many Examples of the Kind might I not lay before you? A Head-dress, which Queen *Anne* bespoke, and which was bought by the Duchess of *Marlborough*, broke that formidable League of Sovereigns that were making War upon *France*, and brought about the Peace which the same Queen made soon after. A Bow which *Cæsar* forgot to make to the Senators assembled in the Temple of *Concord*, determined *Brutus* to conspire against him. And was not an Apple the Cause of all the Evils that have befallen the Posterity of the first Inhabitants of the terrestrial Paradise?

You'll acknowledge with me, that a Menuet is well worth a Head Dress,

a Bow, or an Apple: It is but having Patience, and we shall see what it may produce. As yet, I am under too much Constraint in writing to you, because it is the first Time I have taken this Liberty; but I promise you, at the next Opportunity, not to confine myself to ordinary Conjectures, but to launch out into more marvellous and vague ones, and, if possible, with more Assurance than your petty Ministers, whose Monotony and Infipidness begin to make you yawn. If the News of this Post don't excite your Curiosity, I promise you shall hereafter have some Intelligence altogether as romantic, and more extravagant and whimsical.

P.S. This Moment I hear that the other Courts interest themselves in the Affair of the Menuets, and in Consequence thereof are going to make very serious Representations to our Court. The Remainder by the next Post.

LET-



LETTER II.

THE grand Affair on the Anvil becomes every Day more and more perplexing: The Incidents we foresaw are partly come to pass; nothing but Couriers are going to and fro, but not so much as a Tittle of their Dispatches transpires. The Embassador of *Fez* has presented a Memorial to our Ministry; his Court is mightily concerned for the Musick of *Aix* in *Provence*; and that Memorial imports in expresse Terms, that the King of *Fez* will look upon a Refusal to perform it here, as an Affront offered to him in the Persons of his Allies.

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The

The Embassador of the Hospodar of *Walackia* has joined his Representations on the same Subject, and added, that his Master would be obliged to make a common Cause with the City of *Aix*, in order to vindicate the Honour of its Menuets, especially since he had established an Academy of *French* Musick at *Ar-cim*. Hitherto all Representations have proved fruitless: Our Court persists in its Resolution, and appears resolved to abide Extremities in this Matter. Every body has been surpris'd at this Inflexibility; but their Wonder has ceased since they have been informed by the best Authority, that the Court has been encouraged in this Stiffness by the defensive Alliance it has just concluded with the Republic of *Santo Marino*. Well did *Solomon* say, that all Things are at last made manifest; for there is nothing hid from our Penetration: Alliances, Treaties, secret Conventions,

tions, are all unravelled: We guess at a Part, we hear something, tack our Conjectures to it, and at last come to know the Treaties as well as if we had made them.

You'll be exceedingly astonished to find here the *Secretissimo* Article of this lately concluded Alliance; but this is the Accident whereby it fell into our Hands. The Embassador of *Santo Marino* dining the other Day at the House of the Embassador of the thirteen Cantons, dropt the secret Article of the Treaty, in pulling his Handkerchief out of his Pocket: The Article was immediately pickt up, and we have been happy enough to get it. How careful ought an Embassador to be, and how dangerous is it to pull out his Handkerchief!

The Secret Article in Question runs thus:

MOREOVER, his *Prussian* Majesty engages, that if on Account of this Alliance now concluded, the Most Serene Republic of *Santo Marino* should be molested by wretched *Serenades*, or by *Chacones* to her disagreeable, his Majesty will, at his own Cost and Charges, furnish her with a Ship of 100 Guns and four Frigates, which he will constantly keep in Readiness in his Port of *Halberstadt* for the Service of the said Republic; and in case contrary Winds or other Conjectures should render pecuniary Succours more eligible, that Squadron shall be estimated at the Sum of 400 Livres, payable in that Kind of Coin, in which the *Cologne-Gazeteer* was paid ten Years ago, and of which the

Re-

‘ Republic may make an admirable
 ‘ Use against her Enemies. In Re-
 ‘ turn, the Most Serene Republic of
 ‘ *Santo Marino* engages to make a
 ‘ common Cause with *Prussia* in all
 ‘ Things relative to the Affair of the
 ‘ Menuets; and notwithstanding the
 ‘ antient Alliance subsisting between
 ‘ the said Republic and City of *Aix*,
 ‘ ever since the Time of *Peter of Pro-*
 ‘ *vence*, and the fair *Maguelone*, where-
 ‘ by she has guarantied to the said City
 ‘ the peaceable Possession of its Mu-
 ‘ sick, the Republick of *Santo Ma-*
 ‘ *rino* looks upon those Engagements
 ‘ as null and void, it being well un-
 ‘ derstood that she thinks herself at
 ‘ Liberty to explain her Promise as
 ‘ she thinks fit, to contract at the
 ‘ same Time contradictory Engage-
 ‘ ments according to her good Plea-
 ‘ sure, and to invalidate her antient
 ‘ Treaties whenever she takes it in-
 ‘ to her Head to make new Ones.
 ‘ She promises his *Prussian Majesty*
 ‘ to

' to keep her Contingent in readi-
 ' ness, that it may be at hand to be
 ' employed whenever the *Casus fæ-*
 ' *deris* may require. This Contin-
 ' gent shall consist of three Fiddlers
 ' and three Suttlers; and in case his
 ' *Prussian* Majesty should judge it
 ' more expedient to turn these Suc-
 ' cours into Money, the Most Serene
 ' Republic shall pay from the Mo-
 ' ment War is declared, an annual
 ' Subsidy of one Zequin and a half,
 ' four Sols and ten Deniers.

' *N. B.* The Succours on both
 ' Sides shall be ready to set out in
 ' three Months at farthest after they
 ' are demanded; and in case those
 ' Succours be not found sufficient,
 ' the high contracting Powers en-
 ' gage to double them. This se-
 ' parate Article shall be kept *most se-*
 ' *cret*, and have the same Force as
 ' the general Treaty. Besides which,
 ' they

‘ they engage to invite other friendly
 ‘ Powers to accede to this Alliance.’

The general Treaty is not yet published ; but as it is made to be communicated to all the World, we previously assure you that you may spare yourselves the trouble of perusing it: The Quintessence of the Poison, the subtil Venom, is all included in this secret Article ; and this must needs render it extremely savoury to you. The Embassador of *Fez*, who was at the Entertainment where this secret Article was lost, took a Copy of it immediately, and sent it by his Player on the Guitare (who acts a grand Part at *Fez*) to his Court : And as all the Circumstances of such an Affair as this are important, we must not omit to tell you, that the Courier’s Left *Omoplata* was Convex, and that he rid an unruly fiery Horse.

This

This great Event affords an ample Field for our Conjectures. If a War breaks out, the City of *Aix*, the King of *Fez*, and the Hospodar of *Walachia* may strengthen their Alliance with that of the most righteous *Kouli Kan*, who put out the Eyes of his Uncle and Brothers, the Shah of *Persia* now reigning; or if he should be too much occupied with the Intestine Wars that lay waste his fine Kingdom, they may unite with the great Mogul, or the Emperor of *Japan*, from which Countries they may get real Camels and Elephants. It is impossible that a certain Court should be able to make Head against such combined Forces; and 'tis to be hoped that the happy Day will come when we shall see it sink under the Weight of its Enemies. How joyful shall we be at those long expected Events! How elated will your Coiners of News
be

be to see their Prophecies at last fulfilled ; and how great will be their Obligations to the two Menuets, one of which is in Minor.

In the mean while Festivities and Balls go on here as usual ; the Court thinks of nothing but Diversions, and lives in that Security which precedes grand Catastrophes : But we, who see farther than the Length of our Nose, and are cunning in the superlative Degree, proclaim like the unhappy *Cassandra*, that the Measure is filled up, and the Days of mourning are come : That in spite of the Most Serene Republic of *Santo Marino*, and even that of *Lucca*, we shall soon see in this Country a Swarm of Barbarians, who will revenge the Menuets of *Aix* in *Provence*, and burn the Musick which is called that of the good Opera-Maker : That we shall see real Elephants trampling upon the Orchestra ;

tra; and, to crown all our Woes, that barbarous People will change the Voice of those Gentlemen who sing the Treble at our Theatres, into frightful lugubrious Bases; that the Virgins, who officiate on those same Theatres with so much Modesty, will be ravished; and that no other Harmony will then be heard but the Menuets of *Aix*, one of which is in Minor.

In case this Prophecy be not literally fulfilled, we shall not be put out of Countenance by the Disappointment, but continue to prophesy with as much Effrontery as before. As for our Comrades, those Gentry who, like us, take upon them to pry into Futurity, we advise them to foretel past Events, if they can't find out future ones, or to set above an hundred Years for the Accomplishment of their Prophecies.

This

This Moment we learn that the Embassador of *Fez* is seized with a Fit of the Cholic, and has a Mind to get himself electrified in the great Toe. A celebrated Physician assures that his Distemper proceeds from a Repletion of Injuries: His Surgeon pretends it is a political Disease, and that he has judged it proper to absent himself from Court.

P. S. I am obliged to make you an Apology for my Stile, which does not come up to the Elegance and noble Boldness of your Correspondents Diction: I constantly study your Archives, in order to attain to that Degree of Perfection: I begin to borrow their Phrases, and use them as my own; and I shall very soon make use of certain strong, nervous and picturesque Epithets: As for Instance, that *faithless, lawless Hospodar*, shall stand for the Hospodar of *Walachia*; that *perfidious,*

dious, treacherous Prince, will point out to you the King of *Fez*; and I shall endeavour by the most intense Application, to render myself more worthy of your Kindness and Confidence. The Remainder by the next Post.



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LETTER *from Count Rinon-*
chetti, First Senator of the
Republic of Santo Marino,
to Baron Zopenbrug, Mi-
nister of his Prussian Ma-
jesty.

S I R,

WE have heard with equal Sur-
prize and Indignation, that a
Kind of Gazette-maker has wrote
insolent Things concerning our most
serene Republic, and that this scan-
dalous Work has been printed, and
is sold in the King your Master's
capital City.

Hitherto no Piece, no Gazette,
dated from *Berlin*, had offended any
body; and we know besides, that
his *Prussian* Majesty severely pu-
nishes Libels that reflect on private
Persons: We are therefore so much
the

the more surprized to see, that Leave has been given to print the Work which occasions our Complaints; and we dare hope that the King your Master will not suffer any obscure Fellow in his Dominions to affront Sovereigns. We flatter ourselves that he will vouchsafe to chastize the Wretch that has so grievously offended us. He prints Treaties, and secret Articles; nay, he seems to turn us into Ridicule: This is indeed intolerable, and we must have a signal Satisfaction. It is true, there are some States in *Europe* more powerful than ours; but ought we to be despised, because we are not the strongest? Yet my most serene Republic knows how to make herself respected in *Italy*: We have made Head alone, and without Allies, against the Artifices of Cardinal *Alberoni*, the Canons and Excommunications of the Church, and all the Efforts of our Enemies: We discovered their Intrigues, defeated their

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their Projects, fought for our Liberty, and maintained our Ground. Would such Feats, had they been performed at *Bern*, at *Venice*, or at *Amsterdam*, be accounted more glorious than when done at *Santo Marino*? *Rome*, in her Infant State, was not so great as we are at present: Luxury has not softened the Austerity of our Manners; among us antique Virtues are yet to be found; our Frugality and Unanimity support our State: We have nothing precious but our Liberty and our Reputation. 'Tis not a despicable Gazetteer, nor any Power upon Earth, that can deprive us of this invaluable Blessing. We hope his Majesty will no longer suffer us to be affronted, and that being a King he will espouse the Cause of a Sovereign Republic. We flatter ourselves, Sir, that you'll back our just Representations by your great Credit and Influence, and procure my
most

most serene Republic the Satisfaction she expects from the King your Master's Equity.

I have the Honour to be,
SIR, &c.



ANSWER
he will espouse the Cause of a Sovereign Republic. We flatter ourselves, that you'll back our just Repressions by your great Credit and Influence, and procure my most

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ANSWER of Baron Zopen-
brug, Minister of State of
his Prussian Majesty, to
Count Rinonchetti, First
Senator of the Republic of
Santo Marino.

S I R,

THE Moment I received the
Letter you have honoured me
with, I laid it before his Majesty.
You may be persuaded, Sir, that
every body here highly blames those
private Persons who by their Wri-
tings dare to offend Sovereigns.
From the Pope and the Emperor
down to the Bishop of *Constance* and
the Prince of *Zipentzerbst*, there is
no Sovereign but what ought to be
respected by the Public : Whether
he be potent or weak, Friend or
Foe, is nothing to the Purpose ;
and Decency requires, that when
E there

there is Occasion to mention them, it should always be in proper Terms. Great Princes honour themselves in their Equals : If they suffer any private Man in their Dominions to insult another Potentate, they forget what they owe to themselves. For some Time past, the Abuse of the Press has been carried to a scandalous Height : Private Persons have had Cause to complain of the Malignity of Authors ; and more than one Potentate has been affronted by a certain Set of Men who compile News for Bread, who vent more Lies than Truths, and set up for the *Aretines* of our Age. But, Sir, no-body believes the Stories they coin, and by dint of grossly imposing on the Public, they have brought their News into Discredit. We did not wait till your most serene Republic had exhibited her just Complaints about the clandestine Pieces of Intelligence vented here ; we immediately suppressed the Work, and strictly

strictly charged the Author to write no more without a Licence. I flatter myself that the Magnanimity of your most serene Republic will be satisfied with this Chastizement : To forbid a Babbler to prate, or a Hot-head to write, is the greatest Punishment that can be inflicted on them. We are very scrupulous in the Respect and Regard due to foreign Powers, and will never suffer any body here to be guilty of Ill-Manners towards them.

I am charmed that this wretched Trade of News-writing has afforded me an Opportunity to serve your most serene Republic, and to make Acquaintance with a Man of your great Reputation. In these Sentiments I shall always remain,

S I R, Yours, &c.

F I N I S.

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F I W I S